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## CONSTRUCTIVE STUDIES IN THE PROPHETIC ELEMENT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

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### VI. THE PRODUCT OF PROPHECY AND PROPHETISM IN THE NORTHERN KINGDOM.

**1 Kings 11:29 ff.; 12:1-20; 12:15.** § 77. **The Prophetic Revolt in 933 B. C.**—After an examination of 1 Kings 12:1-20 and 1 Kings 11:26-31,<sup>1</sup> consider—

1. The importance of the part played in this revolt by Ahijah, together with (1) the significance of the fact that Ahijah came from Shiloh; (2) the explanation of the revolt presented by the writer himself; (3) to what extent it was, perhaps, a contest between the new civilization of Solomon's times and the narrower spirit of the past.

**4: 7-19.** 2. The influence which may have been exerted by such special factors as (1) the democratic spirit in general; (2) the objection to a non-elective or hereditary monarchy; (3) jealousy of the dominance of Judah and of the favor shown her by Solomon, *e. g.*, in excusing her from the obligation of providing for the king's table; (4) antagonism (in anticipation of Josiah's reformation in 621 B. C.) to the temple-worship emphasized in Jerusalem in opposition to the more liberal and popular system of local sanctuaries; (5) oppressive taxation; (6) the old cleavage between the north and south occasioned in part by the later entrance of the southern clans into Canaan and the marked difference in the character of the two regions as illustrated, *e. g.*, by the schism after the death of Saul, and by the conduct of Judah and Israel after the defeat and death of Absalom.

**2 Sam. 19: 11-15, 40-43; 20: 1-22.**

3. The definite statements attributing the revolt to the

<sup>1</sup> The order of the narrative of Jeroboam's movements varies greatly in the Septuagint from that found in the Hebrew Bible. The two narratives should be carefully compared and estimated. See, *e. g.*, BURNEY, *Notes on the Hebrew Text of the Books of Kings*, pp. 163-69; SKINNER, *Kings* ("New-Century Bible"), pp. 443-46.

influence of the prophets, together with (1) the actual result of the revolt in so far as it affected prophecy; (2) the contrast between the situation in northern Israel and in Judah, so far as it concerned prophecy.

4. The indorsement of the act by a later writer, and his expansion of the explanation, together with (1) the further indication of the prophetic attitude through She-maiah; (2) the different attitude held by Hosea; (3) the attitude toward Jeroboam of still later prophetism, as seen in the story of the prophet from Judah and in the story of Ahijah.

5. What is to be said to the claims, (1) that Jeroboam's practice in establishing local sanctuaries was merely the continuation of the national practice; (2) that the use of material emblems to represent Jehovah was nothing new or strange, the command against such representation being something still in the future; and (3) that the wholesale condemnation by the writer in Kings represents the opinion of a later generation, and not even that of the best contemporary thought.

See: WELLHAUSEN, *Prolegomena to the History of Israel*, pp. 457 f.; WADE, *Old Testament History*, pp. 312-23; KENT, *A History of the Hebrew People*, Vol. II, pp. 16-25; KUENEN, *The Religion of Israel*, Vol. I, pp. 198 f.; MONTEFIORE, *The Religion of the Ancient Hebrews*, pp. 83-86; SCHULTZ, *Old Testament Theology*, Vol. I, pp. 155-58; CHEYNE, art. "Jeroboam," *Encyclopædia Biblica*; WHITE, art. "Ahijah," *HASTINGS'S Dictionary of the Bible*; J. C. TODD, *Politics and Religion in Ancient Israel*, pp. 90-99; H. P. SMITH, *Old Testament History*, pp. 177-80; CORNILL, *History of the People of Israel*, pp. 93-96; KITTEL, *History of the Hebrews*, Vol. II, pp. 241-46; RENAN, *History of the People of Israel*, Vol. II, pp. 149-54; C. F. KENT, *BIBLICAL WORLD*, Vol. IV, pp. 38-48; G. A. COOKE, art. "Jeroboam," *HASTINGS'S Dictionary of the Bible*; GUTHE, art. "Israel," *Encyclopædia Biblica*, col. 2238.

SMEND, *Lehrbuch der alttestamentlichen Religionsgeschichte*, p. 92; WINCKLER, *Alttestamentliche Untersuchungen*, pp. 1-15; GUTHE, *Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, pp. 129-32; STADE, *Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, Vol. I, pp. 344-49.

Also the commentaries on Kings by SKINNER, BURNEY, FARRAR, KITTEL, and BENZINGER.

§ 78. **The Prophetic Work of Elijah** must be gathered from traditions concerning it, in the absence of any writings from the prophet himself.

1. Make a study of 1 Kings, chaps. 17-19, (1) noting the circumstances of Elijah's first appearance; the miraculous preservation of his life; his meeting with Ahab; the contest between the prophet and the king; Elijah's challenge to the Baal prophets and its outcome; the storm and the prophet's flight; his journey to Horeb and his vision; his commission to Elisha; and (2) consider (a) the real point at issue between Ahab and Elijah, viz., *Baalistic corruption of Jehovah-worship*; (b) Ahab's situation and point of view; (c) the significance of the presence of so many Jehovah prophets and of so many Baal prophets; (d) the rôle of Jezebel; (e) what was involved in Baalism as Elijah saw it; (f) the victory or failure of Elijah's contest; (g) the lesson of the vision at Horeb, viz., the presence of Jehovah in the *sound of gentle stillness*; (h) Elijah's accomplishment of the commission received at Horeb.
- 1 Kings 17: 1a. 17: 2-24. 18: 1-17. 18: 18. 18: 19-41. 18: 42-19: 4. 19: 5-18. 19: 19-21. 18: 4, 19; cf. 22: 6. 19: 12.

2. Examine 1 Kings, chap. 21, the story of Naboth's vineyard, (1) noting the account of the seizure of the vineyard; the prophet's message and prediction; the fulfilment in connection with Jehu; and (2) consider (a) Ahab's character as revealed by this incident; (b) the issue here between Elijah and Ahab, viz., *righteousness in government*; (c) its later interpretation by Jehu.
- 21: 1-16. 21: 17, 18, 20. 2 Kings 9: 25, 26.

3. Formulate, in the light of what has already been done, a statement covering the following points: (1) Ahab's political policy; (2) the danger which was involved in it to the Jehovah religion; (3) evidence against the supposition that Ahab really desired to substitute the Baal religion for that of Jehovah; (4) how far was it a political as well as a religious crisis? (5) did Elijah distinguish sharply between Baal and Jehovah? (6) what was Elijah's idea, in contrast with that of other prophets of his time, as to Jehovah's relation to Israel? (7) the conception of Jehovah which especially appealed to Elijah; (8) the ethical idea involved in his stand for righteous administration of the royal office; (9) the connection between this idea and his conception of Jehovah.
- 2 Kings, chap. 1. Mal. 4: 5, 6.
4. Examine later allusions to Elijah and his work, noting (1) the story of his translation; (2) the expectation of

his return, as expressed in the Old Testament, and in the New Testament, in connection with John the Baptist; (3) the estimate of him entertained in the days of the son of Sirach; (4) other references in the New Testament, representing him as appearing with Moses at the transfiguration of Jesus; (5) his place in Jewish tradition, as the expected guest at every Passover; (6) his place in Greek tradition, in connection with mountain-lore; (7) his place in Mohammedan tradition, as *el-Hadir*,<sup>2</sup> the possessor of eternal youth and the champion of the rights of men.

Matt. 17: 12;  
cf. 27: 47;  
Mark 15: 35;  
John 1: 35;  
Ecclus. 48: 1 ff.

Matt. 17: 3;  
Mark 9: 4;  
Luke 9: 30.

5. Consider, still further, (1) the position of Elijah as a protester (*cf.* the Rechabites) against the amenities of civilization, and a perpetuator of the old ideals of the nomadic life; (2) his attitude, in so far as it may be discovered, toward ritual, and toward the law as it is given, for example, in Deuteronomy; (3) his attitude toward idolatry; (4) was he a monotheist, or rather a henotheist? (5) in what particular point lay his great moral power? (6) for what, in brief, does he stand in the progress of religious life and thought?

See T. K. CHEYNE, *The Hallowing of Criticism* (1888); *IDEM*, art. "Prophetic Literature," *Encyclopædia Biblica*, cols. 3859-63; CORNILL, *Prophets of Israel*, pp. 29-36; W. R. SMITH, *The Prophets of Israel* (2d ed.), pp. 76-89; MONTEFIORE, *The Religion of the Ancient Hebrews*, pp. 91-94; A. B. DAVIDSON, *Old Testament Prophecy*, pp. 62-71; KITTEL, *History of the Hebrews*, Vol. II, pp. 262-70; MC-CURDY, *History, Prophecy and the Monuments*, Vol. I, pp. 257-59; H. P. SMITH, *Old Testament History*, pp. 187-94; J. STRACHAN, art. "Elijah," *HASTINGS'S Dictionary of the Bible*; WELLHAUSEN, *Prolegomena to the History of Israel*, 286-93; W. E. ADDIS, art. "Elijah," *Encyclopædia Biblica*; RENAN, *History of the People of Israel*, Vol. II, pp. 229-42; KENT, *A History of the Hebrew People*, Vol. II, pp. 46-54; J. C. TODD, *Politics and Religion in Ancient Israel*, pp. 195-97; WADE, *Old Testament History*, pp. 335-39; MCFADYEN, *The Messages of the Prophetic and Priestly Historians*, pp. 198-204; KUENEN, *Religion of Israel*, Vol. I, pp. 355-57; ROBERTSON, *Early Religion of Israel* (see Index); SCHULTZ, *Old Testament Theology*, Vol. I, pp. 241 f., 297; MILLIGAN, *Elijah* ("Men of the Bible" series).

GUNKEL, *Preussische Jahrbücher*, 1898, pp. 18-51; SMEND, *Lehrbuch der alttestamentlichen Religionsgeschichte*, pp. 152-58; MAYBAUM, *Die Entwicklung des israelitischen Prophetenthums*, pp. 60-76; MARTI, *Geschichte der israelitischen Religion*, pp. 82-87, 256; GUTHIE, *Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, pp. 175-79; STADE,

<sup>2</sup> WEILAND, *Legenden*, p. 177.

*Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, Vol. I, pp. 539-47; MEINHOLD, *Studien zur israelitischen Religionsgeschichte*, Band I, "Der heilige Rest," pp. 2-32.

Also the commentaries on Kings by SKINNER, BENZINGER, KITTEL, FARRAR, AND BURNEY.

§ 79. **The Prophetic Work of Elisha** is in striking contrast with that of Elijah. It partakes of the wonder-element to even a greater extent. Like the story of Elijah, it is contained in narratives coming from different periods.

1 Kings 19:19-21.

2 Kings 2:1-6.

2:7.

2:9 f.

2:11-18.

1. Make a study of Elisha's introduction to the prophetic office, (1) noting his call; his home and social standing; the question he asks, with Elijah's answer, his presence with Elijah in the latter's series of farewell visits to the prophetic societies; his investiture in office; his request for a double portion of Elijah's spirit; his separation from Elijah; and (2) consider (a) the significance of the fact that Elijah's work was to be completed by one who by birth and position occupied so different a social place; (b) the meaning of the symbolical action of the mantle; (c) the force of the request for a double portion; (d) the controlling motive which lies back of the story of the separation by the whirlwind.

2. Study the miracles ascribed to Elisha:

2 Kings 2:14;

2:19-22;

2:23, 24;

3:16-20;

4:1-7;

4:13-17;

4:32-37;

4:38-41;

4:42-44;

5:1-14;

5:20-27;

6:1-7;

6:14-23;

13:20 f.

- a) The dividing of the Jordan with Elijah's mantle;
- b) The sweetening of the waters;
- c) The cursing of the children;
- d) The providing of the armies of Jehoram with

water;

- e) The increase of the widow's cruse of oil;
- f) The birth of a son to the Shunammite;
- g) The raising of the Shunammite's son;
- h) The healing of the pottage;
- i) The multiplication of the loaves and grain;
- j) The healing of Naaman's leprosy;
- k) The smiting of Gehazi with leprosy;
- l) The making of the axe-head to float;
- m) The smiting of the Syrian host with blindness;
- n) The rising of a corpse on touching his bones;

and (2) consider (a) the extreme cruelty of one or two, and the extreme beneficence of the great majority; (b) their

close association with the work of the prophetic societies (see § 7); (c) the fact that they represent Elisha as a kind of wonder-worker (*cf.* also the traditions of Elijah and Jonah); (d) the resemblance, in some cases, to the miracles performed by Jesus; (e) the fact that we find the miracle-stories so abundant in connection with Elijah and Elisha as compared with later prophets.

3. Examine the account of Elisha's various dealings with kings and rulers, (1) noting his presence in the campaign against Mesha, king of Moab; his magnanimous conduct in connection with the entrapped Syrians; his prediction of relief in the siege of Samaria by the Syrians; his interview with Hazael; his anointing of Jehu; the death-bed scene with Joash, Jehu's grandson; and (2) consider (a) his political activity and his character as a statesman; (b) his gentleness and magnanimity; (c) the responsibility of prophethism for the revolt of Jehu and its consequences; (d) the general nature of the predictions which he utters; (e) the long duration of his service.

4. Study, in particular, the revolt of Jehu as instigated by Elisha, and consider (1) the position taken by Elijah; (2) the presence of Jehu when Ahab receives Elijah's rebuke; (3) the commission of Elijah as executed by Elisha; (4) the misfortunes suffered by Israel which could be interpreted as indications of Jehovah's displeasure with the attitude of Ahab and his immediate successors toward Baalism, *e. g.*, the death of Ahab in battle; the accidental killing of his son Ahaziah; the breaking out again of the Syrian wars; the revolt of Moab; (5) the actual facts of the so-called reformation; (6) the history of Baalism in Israel and Judah after this time; (7) the significance of all this for prophecy.

5. Examine later allusions to Elisha and his work, noting (1) the story of restoration to life after contact with Elisha's bones; (2) the eulogy pronounced upon him by the son of Sirach; (3) the only mention in the New Testament.

6. Consider: in general, (1) the significance of the title "man of God" used of Elisha, in all, twenty-nine times; (2) the full sense in which he may be said to have finished the work of Elijah; (3) his relation to the prophetic societies

2 Kings 3: 11-20.

6: 8-23.

6: 24 ff.

8: 7-15; 9: 1-13.

13: 14 ff.

1 Kings 21: 17-24.

2 Kings 9: 25 f.

1 Kings 19: 16 f.;

2 Kings 2: 13.

2 Kings 1: 2-4,

16 f.; 6: 8 ff.;

1: 1; 3: 4 ff.;

9: 14-10: 31.

2 Kings 13: 20 f.;

Ecclus. 48: 12-14.

Luke 4: 27.

2 Kings 4: 7, 9,

16, 22, etc.

- 2: 11 f.; 3: 15; (§ 7); (4) his visions, and his use of music in ecstasy; (5) his  
 6: 14-17; easy familiarity with the people and his fondness for human  
 2: 19 ff.; 4: 42 f.; companionship; (6) his agricultural disposition, as compared  
 8: 1, etc. with Elijah's nomadic tastes; (7) his entire lack of originality  
 1 Kings 19: 19-21. (cf. Elijah); (8) was the sum of his religion "to visit the  
 2 Kings 4: 1 ff. fatherless and widows in their affliction"?

See: W. R. SMITH, *Prophets of Israel* (2d ed.), pp. 85, 87, 116, 131, 208; CORNILL, *Prophets of Israel*, pp. 13 f., 33; MCFADYEN, *Messages of the Prophetic and Priestly Historians*, pp. 206-12; MCCURDY, *History, Prophecy and the Monuments*, §§ 239-44, 612, 935; A. B. DAVIDSON, *Old Testament Prophecy*, pp. 49, 291; TODD, *Politics and Religion in Ancient Israel*, pp. 112, 141-44, 151-56; STRACHAN, art. "Elisha," HASTINGS'S *Dictionary of the Bible*; W. E. ADDIS, art. "Elisha," *Encyclopædia Biblica*; WELLHAUSEN, *Prolegomena to the History of Israel*, p. 463; KITTEL, *History of the Hebrews*, Vol. II, pp. 214 f., 268, 278, 280 ff., 290, 292 f.; KENT, *History of the Hebrew People*, Vol. II, pp. 61-69; RENAN, *History of the People of Israel*, Vol. II, pp. 229 ff.; WADE, *Old Testament History*, pp. 336, 339, 341-43, 351 f.; MONTEFIORE, *Religion of the Ancient Hebrews*, pp. 94 f.; KUENEN, *Religion of Israel*, Vol. I, pp. 360 ff.; LIDDON, *Sermons on Old Testament Subjects*, pp. 195-334; OTTLEY, *A Short History of the Hebrews*, pp. 173 f., 178; ROBERTSON, *Early Religion of Israel* (1896), pp. 53, 61, 84 f., 225; SCHULTZ, *Old Testament Theology*, Vol. I, pp. 241, 243, 297; H. P. SMITH, *Old Testament History*, p. 206.

DILLMANN, *Handbuch der alttestamentlichen Theologie*, pp. 167, 172 ff., 481; SMEND, *Lehrbuch der alttestamentlichen Religionsgeschichte*, pp. 80, 82, 90, 150, 158 f.; MARTI, *Geschichte der israelitischen Religion*, pp. 85, 134; MAYBAUM, *Die Entwicklung des israelitischen Prophetenthums*, pp. 76-81; STADE, *Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, Vol. I, pp. 542 ff.; GUTHE, *Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, pp. 175-79.

- § 80. **Other Prophets and the Prophetic Societies** deserve our attention. Note must be made of (1) "the man of God who came out of Judah;" (2) the "old prophet in Bethel;" (3) Micaiah ben Imlah; (4) Jonah ben Amittai; (5) the dervish who encountered Ahab; (6) Jonadab ben Rechab; and, indeed, the many whose names have not come down to us.

- 1 Kings 22: 6; 18: 4. 1. Consider (1) the fact that in the days of Elijah and Elisha the prophets are numbered by hundreds; (2) the presence of a class known as Nazirites, who resemble the prophets in some ways, and are spoken of by Amos in connection with them; (3) the account of another order or family founded
- Cf. Judg. chap. 13; 1 Sam. i. 11. Amos 2: 11 f.

by Jonadab, who was a co-worker with Jehu against Baalism; <sup>2 Kings 10:15 f.,  
cf. Jer., chap. 35.</sup>  
(4) the fact that at this time (as in that of Samuel) the prophetic societies were flourishing.

2. Go back to Samuel's times and recall (1) that Samuel was called a *seer*; but (2) that in his days there were bands of *dervishes* wandering about, (a) with whom Saul became identified, to the amazement of his friends; (b) who stimulated their activity by music; (c) who sometimes became frenzied and stripped themselves of all outer clothing; (d) who, indeed, were called "mad" by those who knew them; (3) that these dervishes (called *nebhiim*) were wholly religious in their character, in contrast with the *seer*, who was probably secular (cf. the story of Saul, his servant, and the lost asses); (4) that Samuel was probably not the director of these bands in his day, but was entirely distinct from them; (5) that Elijah, one of their number, a true fanatic in the good sense, and wholly religious in his interests, rose so high above his fellows as to become their leader, and as such occupied a plane far higher than that of the order itself; (6) that these forces were organized and used by Elisha in the struggle against Baalism (cf. their various headquarters at Gibeah, Ramah, Gilgal, Mount Ephraim, Bethel, and Jericho).

3. Consider, now, (1) the relation which these prophetic communities or societies sustained toward the people at large and the estimate in which they were held by the people; (2) their relation, likewise, to the priests; (3) the fact that the service of "prophesying" was a joint act, presided over by one of their number; (4) the occurrence of sacred processions as at the "dwellings" in Ramah; (5) the use of music (hand-drum and pipe) as on other festal occasions; (6) the more violent exercises of the Baal-prophets; (7) the suggestion that the institution known as the prophetic order was adopted from the religion of the Canaanites.

4. Consider now (1) the story of the dervish, his fanaticism, the marks between his eyes; (2) the hairy mantle worn by these prophets; (3) the use of music (see above), the "madness" often attributed to them (see above); (4) the fact that they have become an order or guild; and compare with this (a) the companies of modern Mohammedan

1 Sam. 10:5.

10:9-12; 10:5.

19:19-24.

2 Kings 9:11.

1 Sam. 9:6-10.

10:5; 19:20.

1 Sam. 10:5;  
19:18; 2 Kings  
4:1, 38; 6:1;  
2:3, 5.

Cf. Jer. 29:26;  
20:1 f.

1 Sam. 19:20.

19:18 ff.

2 Sam. 6:5; Isa.  
30:29.

1 Kings, chap. 18.

20:35-43.

20:41.

Cf. Zech. 13:4.

- dervishes; (b) the pre-Mohammedan dervishes; (c) uncontrolled religious enthusiasm as sometimes witnessed today.
- Amos 7: 14.** 5. Note (1) the attitude of Amos a little later, toward  
**7: 12.** all this class, his denial that he is one of them; (2) the understanding of Amaziah who, in spite of the prophets' denial,  
**1 Kings 22: 19-23.** classes him as one of them; (3) the attitude of Micaiah ben Imlah toward this crowd; (4) the really fundamental and remarkable difference between Amos and Hosea, as compared with these professional prophets; and consider (a) the stages of development from Samuel (originally only a seer) through Elijah (a religious fanatic of the noblest type), to Amos (a prophet in the highest sense); (b) the character of these hundreds of prophets of a lower type; (c) the careers of such prophets as the "man of God from Judah,"  
**13: 1 ff.** the prophet of Bethel, on the one hand, and on the other,  
**13: 1-32.** of such a man as Jonah ben Amittai, who was adviser to  
**2 Kings 14: 25.** Jeroboam I.

See on the prophetic societies: CHEYNE, art. "Prophetic Literature," § 8, *Encyclopædia Biblica*; A. B. DAVIDSON, art. "Prophecy and Prophets," HASTINGS's *Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. IV, p. 109; CORNILL, *Prophets of Israel*, pp. 12-15, 28; W. R. SMITH, *Prophets of Israel*, pp. 85 f.; ROBERTSON, *Early Religion of Israel*, pp. 83 ff.; SCHULTZ, *Old Testament Theology*, Vol. I, pp. 240 ff.; MONTEFIORE, *Religion of the Ancient Hebrews*, pp. 76 ff.; KENT, *History of the Hebrew People*, Vol. II, pp. 63-65; G. A. SMITH, *Book of the Twelve Prophets*, Vol. I, pp. 26 f.; H. P. SMITH, *Old Testament History*, p. 193; BUDDÉ, *Religion of Israel to the Exile*, pp. 100 ff.; KUENEN, *Religion of Israel*, Vol. I, pp. 316 ff.; WELLHAUSEN, *Prolegomena to the History of Israel*, p. 461; KITTEL, *History of the Hebrews*, Vol. II, pp. 265 ff.

MAYBAUM, *Die Entwicklung des israelitischen Prophetenthums*, pp. 30-59; STADE, *Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, Vol. I, pp. 476-79; SMEND, *Lehrbuch der alttestamentlichen Religionsgeschichte*, pp. 79-94; MARTI, *Geschichte der israelitischen Religion*, pp. 81 f., 121 ff.; SCHWALLY, *Semitische Kriegeralttümer*, Heft I (1901), pp. 103-105.

[The study of the period of the Northern Kingdom will be continued in the next number.]